U.S. Department of Education
2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School

School Type (Public Schools): (Check all that apply, if any) ☐ Charter ☐ Title 1 ☑ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Mrs. Angela West

Official School Name: Dallas Environmental Science Academy

School Mailing Address: 3635 Greenleaf Street
Dallas, TX 75212-3747

County: Dallas State School Code Number: 057905071

Telephone: (972) 794-3950 E-mail: anwest@dallasisd.org

Fax: (972) 794-3951 Web URL: http://www.dallasisd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Michael Hinojosa Ed. D. Superintendent e-mail: HinojosaM@dallasisd.org

District Name: Dallas Independent School District District Phone: (972) 925-3700

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Adam Medrano

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

11TX5

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 154 Elementary schools
   (per district designation) 32 Middle/Junior high schools
   39 High schools
   0 K-12 schools
   225 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 9387

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	53	24	77
K	0	0	0		7	40	36	76
1	0	0	0		8	40	29	69
2	0	0	0		9	0	0	0
3	0	0	0		10	0	0	0
4	0	0	0		11	0	0	0
5	0	0	0		12	0	0	0
							Total in Applying School:	222

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

1 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
1 %	Asian
31 %	Black or African American
61 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
6 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 0%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	2
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	2
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	225
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.00
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	0

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 5%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 10

Number of languages represented, not including English: 1

Specify languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 73%

   Total number of students who qualify: 161

   If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 1%

    Total number of students served: 2

    Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

0	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	0	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	1	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	1	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	1	0
Classroom teachers	16	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	0	0
Paraprofessionals	1	0
Support staff	14	0
Total number	32	0

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 14:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	97%	98%	98%	97%
Teacher turnover rate	21%	21%	5%	19%	0%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

Teacher turnover rates in 2006-2007, 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 were mainly due to retirements and promotions.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in vocational training	0%
Found employment	0%
Military service	0%
Other	0%
Total	**0**%

PART III - SUMMARY

The Dallas Environmental Science Academy (DESA) is a specialized middle school that offers a one-of-a-kind educational program for sixth through eighth grade students who have a strong interest in science, mathematics and technology. At DESA, students have the opportunity to study and explore first hand both the environment and the urban setting as well as strive to reach higher standards in science and mathematics. The school takes a hands-on approach to learning which takes learning beyond the school doors. Our vision is to develop the foundation of a scientific workforce that will protect and sustain our environment today and for future generations. Our mission is, "On time, on task and on a mission to provide and achieve academic excellence for all – with no excuses."

Located in the heart of West Dallas, DESA is a public middle school with a total enrollment of 222 students who come from all parts of Dallas. The school serves a 92% minority population, and 73% of the student body is economically disadvantaged. DESA has traditionally shared a campus with other schools throughout its entire existence, up until this year. A stronger sense of pride prevails among the students, staff and parents now that we have a school "home" to call our own.

DESA fosters a positive learning environment that produces independent and critical thinkers, creative problem-solvers, effective communicators, self-directed life-long learners, and technologically-skilled citizens who graduate with an appreciation for the relevance and understanding of civic responsibilities and knowledge of life skills. Students use this knowledge to prepare for and to succeed at colleges and universities upon graduation from high school.

DESA's culture of high expectations, competition, "whatever it takes with no excuses" mindset and college readiness, has awarded the campus several recognitions. DESA is a recipient of the Texas Business Education and Coalition Award for the sixth consecutive year. This honor roll award is the most prestigious academic award that a Texas public school can achieve. Moreover, DESA is among the few public middle schools in Texas to receive a distinguished Great Schools Rating of 10 out of 10. DESA students are known for winning awards such as the Texas Do the Write Thing Essay Contest, the Earth Day EPA Recycled Art Contest, Math and Science Olympiad, Science Fair and the Common Cents Community Service Scholarship.

At DESA, emphasis is placed on developing leaders at school and in the community. In the morning announcements, in the halls and on the walls, students are recognized for random acts of leadership: responsibility, citizenship, trustworthiness, honesty, respect, caring and fairness. Additionally, in the morning announcements, teachers motivate students to be the best leaders that they can be through daily inspirational leadership quotes to get them off to a great start each day. Students are encouraged to walk with a purpose and perform at their highest potential every day.

DESA students understand that they have a responsibility to the community and the environment, and are therefore very active in community service projects. Annually, our school participates in Common Cents, a student-driven educational program that teaches philanthropy, fundraising, and leadership skills that enrich their lives and prepare them for the future. Moreover, our students volunteer with the Trinity River Project; initiate recycling programs on campus and in the community; educate community members on environmental issues such as the deterioration of the Blackland Prairies; mentor students at the neighboring elementary school; collaborate with senior citizens at the senior living center across the street; and collaborate with city officials to make our schools safer.

DESA students are actively involved in extracurricular activities such as National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, Robotics, Color Guard, Yearbook, Newspaper, Guitar, intramural sports, including basketball and soccer, Diva Steppers, Spirit Leaders, Green Team, Science Fair and Math and Science Olympiad on a daily basis during Advisory. Since most of our students are bussed in from all over Dallas

and depend on the district's transportation system, it is necessary for us to create opportunities such as these during the instructional day to balance their academic lives and enhance our rigorous academic programs.

DESA teachers participate in ongoing content-specific professional development that is focused on inquiry, problem-solving, project-based learning and technology integration. They also engage in job-embedded professional development in our professional learning communities where they share best practices, analyze data, evaluate student work, provide support and discuss current realities about student performance. Hence, there is an expectation that all students perform at high levels.

Stakeholders of the Dallas Environmental Science Academy are valued and given multiple opportunities to provide input and collaborate with faculty and staff on issues such as campus improvement planning, resources, enrichment activities and community service projects through the Parent Teacher Association and Site-Based Decision Making Team.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Positive academic growth continues at DESA with a change in administration this school year. Principal Angela West joined DESA in August 2010 and brought with her an inclusive philosophy of education. Her philosophy is based on building a professional learning community grounded in trustworthiness, integrity and accountability while emphasizing data-driven decision making, academic and fiscal excellence and a collaborative approach to continuous student improvement.

Over the past five years, DESA students in grades seven and eight have met the standard in reading and math. Grade six met the standard for the past four years. Prior to 2005-2006, grade six was considered elementary level. One hundred percent of DESA's students took the state criterion-referenced test, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, for the past five years and scored higher than the state average.

Grade six had a reading commended rating of 74 percent their first year at DESA. In 2007-2008, the commended rate increased by 4 percent with a score of 78 percent. In the 2008-2009 school year, we saw a decrease in the reading commended rate to 67 percent. This 11 percent decrease is a reflection of faculty and curriculum changes. Last year, 2009-2010, we saw a return to 74 percent commended for this grade for reading.

One hundred percent of seventh grade DESA students met the standard in reading every year except 2007-2008. The result was a 1 percent decrease. Years four and five saw the largest increase in commended ratings. Year five resulted in a 28 percent rise in commended scores; year four the increase was 26 percent with a commended rating of 54 percent. Year three, 2007-2008, the commended rate increased 4 percent with 58 percent commended. The years 2008-2010 were consistent, revealing a commended rating of 52 percent.

DESA's eighth grade reading commended scores remained above the state's commended scores. They are as follows: year 5, 68 percent; year 4, 52 percent; year 3, 82 percent; year 2, 83 percent; and year 1, 76 percent. The numbers fluctuate due to curriculum and faculty changes over the last five years.

Sixth grade DESA students met the standard in mathematics 100 percent of the time. Grade six scored 67 percent commended for 2006-2007. An increase of 4 percent for 2007-2008 resulted in 71 percent commended. Grade six commended scores for years 1 and 2 were 63 percent. Grade seven met the standard for year 5 at 83 percent; year 4, 96 percent; year 3, 95 percent; year 2, 97 percent; and year 1, 100 percent. During the past five years, Dallas ISD changed the math curriculum for the seventh and eighth grades. The *Apollo* and *Saturn* curriculum projects replaced the original curriculum. This change, along with faculty changes, accounts for the fluctuation in scores. Grade eight made gains in year 3 and year 2. Their commended scores are as follows: year 5, 35 percent; year 4, 30 percent; year 3, 48 percent; year 2, 46 percent; and year 1, 42 percent.

At DESA, we study our student subgroups to determine how to increase our commended scores on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. DESA's sixth, seventh and eighth grades are meeting the state-mandated assessments, but there is always room for growth. DESA's ultimate goal is 100 percent commended in grades six, seven and eight.

In the most recent year of assessment, 2009-2010, there is an unfortunate achievement gap of 10 or more percent between the commended scores of African Americans in mathematics and those of the other subgroups. Grade six revealed a 13 percent difference in scores; grade seven revealed a 10 percent gap in scores; and eighth grade revealed a 21 percent difference in scores.

Several strategies are in place to close the achievement gap between African Americans and other subgroups. There is a continued focus on quality instruction that is driven by a rigorous curriculum, high standards, high expectations of all students and professional development that is based on the needs of teachers and students. Assessment is always aligned with the standards, providing ownership through student-generated profiles and ongoing evaluation of student learning. We focus on meeting individual student needs and rely on strong parental and community support.

The 2010 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills vertical scale scores vary by grade level and subject. In grade six reading, the met standard score is 644; grade seven is 670; and grade eight is 700. For commended in reading, grade six is 797; grade seven is 829; and grade eight is 850. Met standard in mathematics for grade six is 637; grade seven is 670; and grade eight is 700. For commended in mathematics, grade six is 783; grade seven is 823; and grade eight is 850.

The websites used for our state assessment results are: https://mydata.dallasisd.org, (campus data packet), http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/ and http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index3.aspx?id=3818&menu.

2. Using Assessment Results:

At the Dallas Environmental Science Academy, we take data very seriously. Our team understands that data is not only a way to find students' strengths and weaknesses, but it also serves as a tool to discover trends across subject areas and grade levels.

We use fifth grade TAKS scores to analyze strengths and weaknesses of our incoming sixth graders. This allows our sixth grade team of teachers to analyze TAKS scores and prepare in advance to address students' weaknesses and enhance their strengths. Because our sixth graders are new to the middle school setting, we strive to make sure they adjust academically by monitoring their progress throughout the school year. Our goal is to always increase commendable TAKS scores and maintain our Exemplary status. Our school is unique in that most students come to us already performing at a high level academically, but we want to ensure that they move forward with more gains.

Each department at DESA meets collaboratively for an hour and a half each week. We use summative assessments such as Dallas ISD's Benchmarks and Assessment of Course Performance (ACP) tests and formative assessments such at student produced artifacts to assess students' mastering of the TEKS. After meeting departmentally, the faculty then meets by grade level to look for trends and create intervention plans. These intervention plans include bringing specialists from the district to lead instruction on our campus so students are able to focus on targeted TEKS.

In class, students assess their own progress after formative and summative assessments. They graph assessment results by TEKS that were tested and highlight the percentage of questions they answered correctly for each learning objective. The students can see immediately the TEKS they still must master. Then, they write a reflection and set their own goals for improvement.

Every year, our principal meets one-on-one with each student at the start of the spring semester to discuss their progress, create goals to master all TEKS from all subject areas, and to create a plan of action to keep improving throughout the remainder of the school year. To accomplish this, the principal and students use the aforementioned TEKS grids they completed during class.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

At the Dallas Environmental Science Academy, assessment results and student progress are first analyzed in faculty, collaborative, grade level and Campus Instructional Leadership Team meetings. Then, DESA informs its community of the assessment results in a number of ways. These include:

- Parent Portal: Parents access their child's attendance, previous test results, report cards, assignments and current grades on the district's online system. This access promotes increased parent/child and parent/teacher communication to ensure student success.

- Progress Reports: Reports are issued every three weeks and frequently emailed and distributed by teachers to inform parents of their child's academic progress and social skills behaviors.

- Site-Based Decision Making Team and Parent Teacher Association: Assessment results are shared and discussed with parents and community members and are also used to develop the Campus Improvement Plan.

- Teacher/Student Conferences: Teachers and students have academic conferences to set up a support system, such as after school tutoring or providing additional assistance during the advisory class period. Teachers also communicate and discuss assessment results with students to set future TAKS goals for the upcoming school year.

- Teacher/Parent Conferences: Teachers inform parents of their child's progress, challenges, accomplishments, achievements and concerns either by phone or face-to-face interactions.

- Principal/Student Conferences: The principal meets with each student on a one-to-one basis to discuss previous test results, semester grades, benchmark scores, final exam grades, goals and action plans to help him/her to achieve the goals.

- School Report Card: This report is distributed to parents and provides information regarding the campus's TAKS performance data by subpopulations, teacher-student ratio, campus acknowledgements and budget.

- Recruiting Fairs: The principal, counselor, teachers, students and support staff inform in-district and out-of-district students and parents about the school's academic performance and specialized programs of study at the District Magnet Fair and Open House in an effort to recruit interested and qualified applicants.

- Newsletters: Newsletters are periodically sent home informing and reminding parents of assessment results, campus academic goals and strategies that can be implemented at home to help achieve our goals.

At DESA, everyone understands that our success is contingent upon parental and community involvement. Therefore, it is essential that we inform our stakeholders of our past academic achievements, our current academic status, and our future academic endeavors.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The Dallas Environmental Science Academy strives for excellence, and we love sharing our success stories. We use many different avenues to keep parents, staff and students up-to-date and informed by posting our achievements. This includes a school website, parent teacher conferences, email updates, the Parent Portal and faculty meetings.

We have a school website that highlights the school's achievements along with individual student accomplishments. The main page shows our recent awards and highlights our Live to Give grant, a $15,000 Texas Parks and Wildlife grant given to the school to promote awareness about the Blackland Prairies. The website also has links for parents and students to stay current on what is happening in the classroom, ways to encourage parent partnerships within the school, suggestions for helping students maximize their learning and upcoming events.

We also reach out to parents with a weekly email update to keep them involved in the current events of the school. The Parent Portal allows instant access to students' grades and test scores, giving parents the opportunity to encourage students to keep up with their assignments. It also alerts parents of any issues before the end of a grading period.

The faculty has mandatory parent teacher conferences twice a year and at other times as requested by parents or teachers. This builds a sense of partnership between parents and teachers and opens the doors of communication. Parents and teachers work together to make sure the students maximize their effort and perform at the highest level possible.

The faculty also communicates with one another at weekly grade level meetings and monthly staff meetings. The expectation of the school is that all students pass their ACP and TAKS tests, and our goal is that every student earns commended status on the TAKS tests. We use these meetings to share new teaching methods and individual classroom successes. Recently, we implemented Socratic Circles in the classroom and shared our experiences at a faculty meeting.

Communication is a key component of the success of students as DESA, and we use as many ways as possible to make sure students and teachers are all performing at their absolute best.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The Dallas Environmental Science Academy offers a unique educational program to sixth, seventh and eighth grade students who have a strong interest in science. Students have the opportunity to study and explore both the environment and the urban setting as well as strive to reach higher standards in science and mathematics. The school takes a hands-on approach to learning by taking learning beyond the school doors.

The core curricula implemented includes language arts, math, reading, science and social studies. Courses in environmental studies are also part of the required curriculum. Classes in art, physical education, technology applications, plus our talented and gifted program provide a well-rounded education for our students. All disciplines are guided by the Principles of Learning with an emphasis on awareness and responsibility to the environment.

Our language arts and reading curriculum delves into writing, comprehension, vocabulary development, and listening and speaking skills. Instruction is delivered through textbooks, online tutorials, literary selections and advanced placement resources such as *Laying the Foundation*. Research-based strategies utilizing higher order thinking skills drive the lesson structure to meet the needs of all students.

The math curriculum is broken into grade levels. Students take Math 6, Math 7 Pre-AP and Algebra 1 Pre-AP. Each year focuses on the following math concepts: number, operation and quantitative reasoning; patterns, relationships and algebraic thinking; geometry and spatial reasoning; probability and statistics; measurement; and underlying processes and mathematical tools. The concepts are addressed at increasing levels of complexity as students advance. Project-based lessons are structured to encourage higher order thinking. One such project is Monarch Math, which gives students the opportunity to care for and measure milkweed plants for monarch butterflies.

All students are exposed to two sessions of science. One session is the district required grade level science class. The second session is an environmental studies course unique to our school. In both classes, students are engaged from bell to bell in project-based learning, laboratory activities and a hands-on approach to discovery. The use of foldables, poster projects, construction of 3-D models and other enrichment projects are the norm in these classes. Science instruction is supplemented with a variety of field trips, including partnership with the Environmental Education Center in Seagoville, Texas, and our culminating outdoor education program in Glen Rose, Texas.

The social studies curriculum is based on district and state standards and actively engages students in history and geography at the state, national and global levels. Students in all three grade levels are apprenticed as historians to deepen their knowledge by using activities in which they apply historians' habits of thinking. They learn by using the political, economic, geographical, and social perspectives of history and by gaining knowledge based on essential questions and enduring understandings. A variety of hands-on activities are used in individual and group settings and include projects, role-playing and disciplinary literacy.

Our fine arts curriculum is strongly based in science and math to teach cross-curricular content in every lesson through the medium of art. The art program is formulated based on state and district standards with continuous modifications based on the needs of students and to support the other content areas. The art program also emphasizes environmental awareness. Students are encouraged to be creative in the use of recycled products and alternative resources in the production of their projects.

The physical education curriculum is built around three programs that teach fitness, health and social awareness. The *Fitnessgram* assessment is a basic physical fitness and skills assessment given to each

student as a benchmark of their fitness level. The CATCH program (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) is a school-wide program designed to improve the health of all children and to help prevent childhood obesity and diabetes. This program covers nutrition, healthy physical activities and fundamental skills activities that are used across the curriculum. Finally, the social skills program teaches students social skills and important character qualities from the Character Counts system.

Our school has a distinctive technology department that offers Gateway to Technology and Technology Applications to seventh and eighth grade students. Gateway to Technology is an activities-oriented program designed to challenge and engage the natural curiosity and imagination of middle school students. In Technology Applications, students study terms, concepts and data input strategies so that they can learn to make informed decisions about various technologies and their applications.

Due to a shortage of certified Spanish teachers in Texas, a small enrollment, limited teacher allocations and a rigorous science program that requires students to take two science classes at each grade level, Spanish is offered via online courses to our students. Additionally, plans are being made to offer traditional seventh and eighth grade Spanish classes in the 2011-2012 school year.

2. Reading/English:

The English/Language Arts curriculum is influenced by the Campus Improvement Plan from our yearly focus on established High Priority Goals. The ELA curriculum takes an innovative approach to reading and ELA instruction that emphasizes the skills of speaking, listening, reading, written composition, spelling and the mechanics of writing (grammar, usage and capitalization). Careful attention has been placed on instructional strategies with respect to comprehension such as connecting, inferring, monitoring, predicting, questioning, summarizing and visualizing. This is done through the understanding and use of specific metacognitive strategies in a literature rich environment. Our current textbook adoption reflects the integration of the language arts (listening, speaking, reading, written composition, spelling and mechanics of writing) as well as a balanced approach to reading.

Through reading, speaking, writing, viewing, listening and representing, our students use their skills in reading and language arts in purposeful ways. The curriculum offers seventh and eighth grade students the opportunity to take Pre-Advanced Placement courses. Selected sixth grade students may enter the Talented and Gifted program. All students are asked to inquire into important subject areas, to make connections across books and content and to evaluate others' works as well as their own through the utilization of rubrics. Instruction in the area of word identification is balanced with instructional strategies that emphasize comprehension strategies such as predicting, reading to get the gist, self-monitoring and rereading. In addition to the already established curriculum, reading and writing camps are held throughout the year in order for students to grasp concepts and skills that are critical for their academic success.

Students reading below grade level are not an issue on our campus due to our academic acceptance requirement. In lieu of this policy, the following measures are in place to ensure that a high-quality reading program is afforded to all students, including those who are at grade level but are challenged by reading. All ELA teachers attend the required 21 hours of professional development during the summer as well as district and Region 10 courses that are aligned with the needs of our student population. Teachers are also involved in book and article studies to enrich their minds with ideas that will better serve our students in becoming avid readers and making connections to prior knowledge, to self, to the text and to the world.

3. Mathematics:

As a complement to science, exemplary math instruction is critical to our students' academic success. Math curriculum and instruction is driven by state and local standards, our Campus Improvement Plan and our professional development training. The foundation of our curriculum is centered on numbers and operations, patterns and relationships, geometry and measurement, probability and statistics, and

qualitative and spatial reasoning. Algebraic thinking is another important component in our curriculum. Beginning with our sixth grade classes, math teachers use this foundation as a guide to develop lesson plans that encourage higher order thinking across all grade levels.

Many math classes begin with bell ringers, short activities designed to prepare students for class and to engage them in the learning process. Students often lead discussions focused on evaluating math problems, which allow teachers to informally assess their progress. Algebra I and Math 7 Pre-AP students use the district-developed *Apollo* and *Endeavor* math programs for high level activities designed to enhance understanding. Also, increased technology has bolstered our level of instruction. Not only do students have access to online textbooks and lessons, but instructional videos, games and online assessment programs provide students with tools that have resulted in an increased understanding of math concepts and higher test scores.

Each year, the math department hosts an all-day math camp to motivate students as they prepare for local and statewide testing. The entire Dallas Environmental Science Academy family guides students through math orientated games and activities to build their skills. Prior to TAKS testing, students have additional opportunities to practice math skills such as measurement, conversion, fractions and ratios through targeted instruction in advisory classes. Each advisory is rotated periodically to ensure that all students have the opportunity to strengthen their understanding of each math concept.

Students struggling with math concepts have options to improve their understanding. Teachers conduct in school and after school tutoring sessions several times a week. Students also have access to online tutoring programs, which promote self-management of learning. We believe that students need as much help and support at home as they receive at school. Therefore, we developed a school-wide program that encourages parent participation by requesting that parents work with their children daily for a specified amount of time to ensure academic achievement. Together, we all work to ensure students' success in math.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

In addition to the strong core curriculum, students at the Dallas Environmental Science Academy take environmental studies. The environmental studies science class is a mandatory elective for all grade levels. Through this course, students are tasked with acquiring knowledge to better care for our planet by acquiring the essential skills and information on the impact of human behavior on Earth. The course expands the topics presented in the Dallas Independent School District's curriculum planning guide with additional studies in three environmental strands: ecology, energy and land management.

The environmental goals are accomplished in a multitude of ways. First, the school has a partnership with the Environmental Education Center in Seagoville, Texas, a Dallas Independent School District facility. Students attend two field trips per grade level each year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Students are exposed to pond water ecology, a study of the Post Oak forest, the grassland prairie restoration, weathering, limnology, understanding climate and weather, composting, animal adaptations and the Quanah Parker Garden Project. Our school also has a partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency of Dallas. Speakers from various departments visit our school and present laboratory activities. We also attend the Earth Day celebration in Dallas, exposing students to the care and nurturing of the Earth, including participation in the recycled art contest. Other off-campus experiences include visits to the Planetarium at University of Texas in Arlington, the Sixth Floor Museum, the Dallas World Aquarium, The TXI cement processing plant in Midlothian, Texas, and other field trips.

Our annual culminating event is an outdoor education program in Glen Rose, Texas. Each grade level travels to Glen Rose, where for three days we camp on-site. All lessons are tied to the study of the environment. Environmental Studies classes are held in and near the Paluxy River. Studies include limnology, collection of macro-invertebrates for identification and quantity, oxygen content of the river and entomology. The study of the environment extends beyond the science classes to include cross-curricular activities. Eighth grade students visit Tarleton University and seventh grade students visit the

Fossil Rim Wildlife Center. Ultimately, through the environmental studies course and our field trips, students gain an enhanced awareness of the environment.

5. Instructional Methods:

At the Dallas Environmental Science Academy, students participate in activities that enhance their observation skills and build their critical thinking skills. With a multidisciplinary approach in all content areas, small classes to foster individual attention and expert guidance by a highly qualified staff, our students are challenged to become active shapers of their environment.

Our students come from a variety of social and ethnic backgrounds with various academic strengths and interests. As an academy, our students often have strengths in some subjects and struggle more in other subjects, making differentiation a constant and dynamic aspect of instruction in all content areas. Students are continuously challenged to move beyond their current level in every subject and push the limits of their achievement.

To meet this challenge in instruction, advanced courses are offered to students who qualify in math, language arts and the Talented and Gifted program. Students are given options for their projects and products, providing them with the freedom to be creative while still pushing their learning and staying aligned with the lesson objectives. Instruction in all courses is modified to various levels of complexity in order to meet the needs of each student, allowing individuals to go as far as they are able in each activity.

Outside of class, students are presented with a number of opportunities for extra support and assistance as well as opportunities for enrichment and advanced learning. After school tutoring sessions, dedicated study classes during advisory and homework support after school keep students on track with their learning. Additionally, content-specific camps are held throughout the year to target key areas such as math, language arts and social studies.

Enrichment opportunities are also provided for students to apply their knowledge to real-world challenges and activities. These activities include Robotics Team, Mock Trial, Math and Science Olympiad, UIL, Science Fair, Green Team and National Junior Honor Society. These activities are tailored to advance the learning of the students by building on their in-class knowledge through practical application and experience.

6. Professional Development:

At the Dallas Environmental Science Academy, we establish High Priority Goals that drive instruction and professional development with guidance from the Campus Improvement Plan and resources from the Institute for Learning. All teachers complete 21 hours of required professional development, which includes yearly content updates for each department. Teachers also attend additional professional development opportunities with emphasis on creativity, lesson design and inquiry. The majority of professional development outside of core content is focused on four key areas: disciplinary literacy, gifted and talented, technology applications and the Principles of Learning.

Disciplinary literacy focuses on the use of a variety of written and visual resources for analysis. Students are exposed to literary resources in various forms in all content areas, so enhancing the faculty's skills in this area is a vital aspect of our professional development program. For example, Socratic Seminar training prepared teachers to guide students through a discussion to engage them in reading, listening and speaking.

As an academy, we have a high percentage of gifted and talented students; therefore, it is incumbent upon our staff to attend training that will add value to this population. Training in this area focuses on encouraging creativity in projects and meeting the unique social and emotional needs of high-performing students.

Technology is a powerful way to meet the needs of the visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile learners through the use of data projectors, document cameras, interactive tablets, interactive white boards and online learning activities. Training in new technology and technology applications is ongoing for our faculty through a monthly program known as Technology Tuesdays. This program provides teachers with new tools to engage students in instruction and builds upon the 21st century technology skills that students will need to achieve success in their future endeavors.

The Principles of Learning are a framework through which we analyze our effectiveness as a school in the areas of Academic Rigor, Accountable Talk, Clear Expectations and Self-Management of Learning. Learning Walks℠ are used throughout the year to discover specific ways to increase student achievement aligned with academic standards. Tools such as rubrics are one example of a specific application of the Clear Expectations principle that has been enhanced at our school. Self-Management of Learning is addressed through individual profiles that students create and use to reflect on their course progress and mastery of state objectives.

7. School Leadership:

At the Dallas Environmental Science Academy, our leadership framework is based on a collaborative and inclusive model where the entire faculty, staff and student body are part of the DESA family. To be successful as a school, we must work together and draw strength from each other to lead our students to academic success.

At the head of our family is the administration team, which includes our principal and counselor. The principal collaborates with the staff and key stakeholders about the mission, vision and goals for the campus. One strategy used by the principal during the school year is to meet personally with each student. These meetings encourage students to reflect on their academic progress, promoting self-management of learning. The counselor continuously monitors the students through sessions in organization, study skills, Character Counts, college and career readiness, and the high school selection process. Our administration supports and encourages our teachers to initiate new strategies, seek innovative programs that enhance our curriculum and improve and build on existing programs that have had a positive impact on student achievement.

Working closely with our administration is the Campus Instructional Leadership Team, comprised of key members of the faculty. Through state, regional, local and campus- based training, CILT gathers information and resources to bring to the campus. Principal-led and teacher-led professional development and professional learning communities foster collaboration and build leadership capacity among the staff.

The heartbeat of DESA is the teachers who work every day to push their students to academic excellence. Teachers are empowered to make decisions about improving student learning by taking risks and thinking outside of the box.

Student leaders are recruited and developed to lead the various extracurricular programs that DESA offers. As the majority population in the school, DESA students play a vital role in the leadership of our school. Through programs such as National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, Color Guard, Spirit Leaders and the DESA Diva Steppers, our students are given the opportunity to present their perspectives and affect the future of the school. Notable activities have included attending national and state leadership conferences and important events such as President Barack Obama's inauguration.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6

Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2010 Publications - New Each Year

Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	
Commended	63	63	71	67	
Number of students tested	76	54	69	66	
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	
Commended	66	60	71	66	
Number of students tested	60	35	51	55	
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	
Commended	50	63	77	85	
Number of students tested	22	19	17	13	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	
Commended	69	59	73	66	
Number of students tested	48	29	40	47	
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White Students					
Met Standard			100		
Commended			60		
Number of students tested			10		
NOTES: 1. During the 2005-2006 school year, the enrollment did not include sixth grade students.					

11TX5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2010 Publications - New Each Year

Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	99	100	100	100	
Commended	74	67	78	74	
Number of students tested	76	54	69	66	
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	98	100	100	100	
Commended	78	63	73	78	
Number of students tested	60	35	51	55	
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	
Commended	77	58	77	69	
Number of students tested	22	19	17	13	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	98	100	100	100	
Commended	75	69	78	77	
Number of students tested	48	29	40	47	
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White Students					
Met Standard			100		
Commended			80		
Number of students tested			10		
NOTES: 1. During the 2005-2006 school year, the enrollment did not include sixth grade students.					

11TX5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7

Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publications - New Each Year

Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	97	95	96	83
Commended	40	26	38	51	18
Number of students tested	73	65	74	67	88
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	100	96	97	95	86
Commended	38	30	41	54	17
Number of students tested	53	46	58	56	66
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	92	84	71
Commended	30	20	46	26	0
Number of students tested	23	15	13	19	24
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	95	94	100	89
Commended	42	32	35	59	22
Number of students tested	43	41	54	39	55
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11TX5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7

Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publications - New Each Year

Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	100	99	100	98
Commended	52	52	58	54	28
Number of students tested	73	65	74	67	88
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	99
Commended	47	57	62	54	28
Number of students tested	53	46	58	56	66
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	57	53	62	32	29
Number of students tested	23	15	13	19	24
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	100	98	100	98
Commended	51	49	56	62	31
Number of students tested	43	41	54	39	55
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11TX5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 8

Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publications - New Each Year

Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	100	100	91	99
Commended	42	46	48	30	35
Number of students tested	66	69	71	77	88
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	91	99
Commended	48	49	53	29	36
Number of students tested	49	53	59	63	66
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	80	96
Commended	21	54	30	20	33
Number of students tested	14	13	20	20	27
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	94	100
Commended	52	45	48	33	33
Number of students tested	44	51	42	51	54
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11TX5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8

Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2006-2010 Publications - New Each Year

Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	76	83	82	52	68
Number of students tested	66	69	71	77	88
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	82	85	85	46	71
Number of students tested	49	53	59	63	66
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	71	69	65	60	63
Number of students tested	14	13	20	20	27
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	75	84	86	49	70
Number of students tested	44	51	42	51	54
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11TX5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	99	98	95	91
Commended	49	44	52	48	27
Number of students tested	215	188	214	210	176
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	99	99	98	95	92
Commended	51	46	54	48	27
Number of students tested	162	134	168	174	131
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	96	87	84
Commended	36	47	50	38	20
Number of students tested	59	47	50	52	51
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	99	98	98	98	94
Commended	55	44	50	52	28
Number of students tested	135	121	136	137	109
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100		
Commended	40	47	67		
Number of students tested	15	15	18		
NOTES: Any numbers less than ten in any group were not reported.					

11TX5

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	99
Commended	67	68	72	60	48
Number of students tested	215	188	214	210	176
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	99	100	100	100	99
Commended	69	69	73	59	50
Number of students tested	162	134	168	174	131
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	68	60	68	52	47
Number of students tested	59	47	50	52	51
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	99	100	99	100	99
Commended	67	69	71	62	50
Number of students tested	135	121	136	137	109
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100		
Commended	80	80	78		
Number of students tested	15	15	18		
NOTES: Any numbers less than ten in any group were not reported.					

11TX5